ABOUT GROWTH

A Quarterly Publication About Growth Management

Spring 1995



Building Foundations for the Future



Reflections on the "true" costs of providing services statewide

By Mike McCormick Planning Consultant

he supporters and detractors of the Growth Management Act are right on one point—the act has made it extremely difficult to avoid facing the costs of providing facilities and services to our communities over the next 20 years.

For the first time in this state, local governments planning under the act are required to identify what facilities are necessary to implement their plans.

Traditionally, we have not done this particularly well. Planning and public works functions are notoriously independent or have been until recently. We have been reluctant to make large investments in future needs and are quick to forget existing systems, especially when they are buried and out of sight.

A major study of infrastructure needs in the state completed in 1984 identified a significant gap in available funding. This study led to the creation of the Public Works Trust Fund. Subsequent studies show that the gap is increasing. The GMA forces us to confront these old habits and, if successful, will require us to contemplate some major changes in the way the public does business.

But at least three related problems need to be addressed—public trust, project efficiency, and funding.

The anti-government feeling that is sweeping the country has dire consequences if it can't be reversed. One of these consequences is the unwillingness of the voters to trust public officials and their plans which results in a big "no" vote on funding authorization requests.

The second has to do with convincing people the projects that are needed are the best alternatives available and that they can be constructed in a cost effective manner. Good local planning with opportunity for the community to get engaged can help with the first. Improved public works engineering, management, and public information can help with the second.

The third problem is funding. Where will funds come from for needed public facilities? The GMA says that you must identify levels of service, necessary facilities to maintain these LOS, and the funds to build them.

These facilities will need to be built or we will be sacrificing our future to consequences that are both difficult to predict and frightening to contemplate. The answer is **not** to change the GMA to remove these requirements. Even without GMA requirements, huge infrastructure deficits and needs will exist.

Sufficient revenue sources must be available to local governments. The tradeoff is that local governments must be organized to efficiently use these funding sources.

True efficiency will require leadership by local and state officials and action by the Legislature. The solution will include a willingness to study, debate, and act on two topics—local governance and financing local governments.

It is time to dust off the findings and recommendations of the Local Governance Study Commission. This 1988, bipartisan report thoroughly examined how we fund and deliver local services. It acknowledged the forces that drive local governments to pursue tax base and how that contributes to sprawl, increased infrastructure costs, and inefficient service delivery.

Several unsuccessful attempts have been made to enact all or parts of the commission's recommendations. They are worthy of resurrection, updating, and serious consideration.

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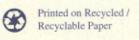
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More work needed on capital facilities elements in first year amendments

By Steve Wells Assistant Director, Growth Management Services

s we approach the fifth anniversary of the passage of the Growth Management Act, it's time to take stock of where we are and make plans for the next round of GMA work.

In the first 120 draft comprehensive plans submitted under the GMA, we have seen a lot of pioneering work from local governments.

Many local governments have tackled the challenge of setting out their vision, including discussions on the quality of life the community desires. They also have discussed how they will manage change.

A big factor in the growth picture is efficient delivery of public services. Communities need to know what services they'll need when and how they'll be financed.

In the capital facilities elements reviewed to date, CTED has found a wide range in the quality of the work. We thought that the following local governments were among those that did a very good job on their elements: the cities of Pomeroy, Milton, Olympia, Bremerton, Kennewick, Republic, Tacoma, Bellevue, Wilson Creek, and Auburn; and Pierce, Thurston, Island, and Garfield counties. We recommend these plans as good examples for jurisdictions of their size.

For some others, their capital facilities element is a more tentative first step in getting the information they need to make tough choices on the quality and quantity of services they can afford to deliver. We understand this is a difficult task.

As we begin defining our technical assistance program for the next biennium, we want to help as many communities as we can strengthen their capital facilities elements.

We recommend local governments review their capital facilities elements annually. If specific projects for at least a six-year period weren't listed in the first GMA plan, that needs to be done in the first year amendments. If specific sources of funding weren't listed for projects, this information also needs to be included in those amendments.

Cities with unincorporated urban growth areas need to show how they will provide urban levels of service for those areas. If they can't finance those services, the land use element needs to be reassessed.

A capital facilities element is an ongoing, learning process. It's difficult, but necessary work. See Pat Dugan's article on page 6 for information on putting together a capital facilities element.

The success of GMA work depends on successful infrastructure planning. Only with good capital facilities planning will local governments be able to deliver the promise of the GMA.

CTED will continue to offer technical assistance to local governments on capital facilities planning. We're exploring what types of workshops, including workshops on financing, and other information you think would be helpful.

Please let us know what you need to strengthen your capital facilities element.

SEPA amendments

How to integrate the Growth Management Act and the State Environmental Policy Act is the subject of recent changes to state SEPA rules.

As of April 6, the rules: Encourage early environmental analysis of potential impacts from GMA plans, policies, and/or regulations; provide for use of expanded scoping for GMA plans and regulations prior to threshold determinations; provide for and encourage concurrent review and comment periods for GMA planning and SEPA documents; require a comment period for determination of non-significance on GMA actions; and, limit the non-exempt provisions for environmentally sensitive areas to those contained within critical areas as designated through GMA.

For information, contact Marvin Vialle at 360-407-6928.

Preliminary study shows huge local infrastructure costs

By Mike Mattox CTED Research Analyst

he state Public Works Board, which directs the Public Works Trust Fund, has released a preliminary study showing costs totaling nearly \$6 billion for capital facilities from many of the first comprehensive plans submitted under the GMA.

Projections were gathered from the plans submitted by counties, cities, and towns and from follow-up phone and fax communications. The report covers cost estimates for a six-year period.

"We've had the expectation that the state has huge infrastructure needs," said Steve Wells, assistant director for Growth Management Services. "The preliminary report gives us a sense of these needs and indicates the magnitude of our financing challenges following Initiative 601."

As of March 1, Growth Management Services of CTED has received plans from 11 of the 23 counties that have comprehensive plans due under the GMA. Of the 163 cities whose plans are due, 104 have submitted plans.

From the submitted plans, six categories were identified to gather cost projections over the 1995-2000 period. The categories are:

- General government and public safety;
- Parks, open space, and recreation;
- Transportation (streets and bridges);
- Drinking water;
- Sewer/wastewater:
- Stormwater/surface water.

Since the plans were submitted in various levels of completeness, they were placed in two categories: 1) all comprehensive plans submitted; and 2) comprehensive plans with projections. All comprehensive plans submitted represent 72 percent of Washington's population and 48 percent of the land mass, while the plans with projections represent 58 percent of the population and 13 percent of the land area.

The total projected costs by category are listed in the table below with costs per capita and costs per square mile (based on the communities reporting).

The report also contains recommendations for future capital planning and maintaining the data base.

Cost of data compilation and report publication were supported, in part, by the state Department of Ecology.

Contact Cecilia Asher at 360-753-3158 to obtain a copy of the report.

What's the Public Works Trust Fund?

The Public Works Trust Fund is a state revolving loan fund that provides low-interest loans to help local governments maintain or improve essential public works systems. The trust fund administers four types of loan programs:

- Construction loan program
- Capital facilities loan program
- Emergency loan program
- A timber PWTF loan program

The construction program provides loans for the repair, replacement, or improvement of existing bridge, road, domestic water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer systems. A strong emphasis in project selection is given to local governments that can demonstrate good management practices.

The capital facilities planning program provides loans to assist communities in meeting the capital facilities planning established by the Public Works Board or as required by the Growth Management Act.

The emergency program provides assistance in meeting costs necessary to repair eligible public works systems damaged by a natural disaster, or an immediate and emergent threat to the public safety due to unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances.

The timber public works program finances new infrastructure that would help save or create jobs. This program operates in the 20 timber-dependent counties of the state. The trust fund has established itself as an important source of infrastructure financing and has become a catalyst to economic activity in the state.

The Public Works Trust Fund is entering its 10th year of project funding. It has invested in 544 loans totaling \$390,928,700.

For more information, contact Pete Butkus, PWTF Managing Director, at 360-586-7186.

Cost projections for 1995-2000 from Submitted Comprehensive Plans

Category	Total Projected Costs	Costs Per Capita	Costs Per Square Mile
Government & Safety	\$468,171,021	\$476	N/A
Parks & Recreation	\$657,288,820	\$408	N/A
Transportation	\$2,314,928,170	\$1,873	\$2,418,243
Domestic Water	\$1,016,682,959	\$992	\$1,312,758
Sanitary Sewer	\$930,343,080	\$1,268	\$324,109
Stormwater	\$599,343,080	\$288	\$324,109
Total	\$5,986,716,191	\$4,332	\$5,605,128

Growth plans need public support and investment

By Dick Ford
Chair, King County Executive Select
Committee on Regional Finance and Services

hat can more than 100 local jurisdictions and 500 elected officials within King County do to start turning GMA plans into realities?

Begin by coming together to improve something we have in common — and a critical part of an effective growth management policy — our public infrastructures. Most importantly, county and local officials must strive to involve voters in this process whenever possible, because they are the ones who will ultimately have the last word on if and how their tax dollars will be spent.

It's no secret that investment in our water supply, wastewater treatment, roads and bridges, schools, drainage, airports, transit, parks, and other shared community systems have not kept pace with county population growth or natural deterioration of those systems.

These fundamental infrastructure investments are essential to public health, livable communities, and economic vitality. And with nearly 300,000 people projected to move into King County in the next 20 years, they're absolutely critical to support the successful implementation of GMA plans.

Take the urban centers concept, for example.

King County's comprehensive 20year growth plan has at its roots in the notion that urban sprawl can be reduced by increasing densities in existing urban areas and by limiting land areas eligible for urban development.

To that end, the plan designates 13 urban centers — Seattle/Central Business District, Renton/Central Business District, and Kirkland-Totem

Lake, to name a few. Housing and employment will be concentrated in these centers. Even in its conceptual form, this idea is controversial.

The study recently completed by the King County Executive's Select Committee on Regional Finance and Services concluded the plan won't become reality unless thousands of individual decisions on where people choose to live, work, and play match up with the urban centers approved late in 1994 by county officials.

Key to the viability of such centers is enhanced transportation and transit systems, quality schools, adequate parks and open space, affordable and attractive housing, and vibrant and accessible retail and cultural facilities.

The private and corporate investment needed to turn such ambitious goals into realities will only follow public investments to develop the necessary infrastructure support systems.

Thoughtful citizens may find different priorities within any list of infrastructure needs, but few will be able to argue the fact that significant public investments must be made over the next 20 years if King County residents are to maintain a high quality of life.

Public officials must be willing to welcome and initiate efforts to bring as many citizens as possible into the process of setting regional financial priorities. The select committee called this a "Forward Thrust" for the 1990s—a grassroots effort aimed at prioritizing through citizen power the public investment needs of our region.

Indeed, all of us in King County must work together to recognize and address the fundamental infrastructure challenges we have in common, rather than dwell on the differences in our localized GMA plans.

Otherwise, there will be no effective growth management plans,

only ad hoc decisions which cannot effectively share our communities' desire to assure a high quality of life.

Reflections on the "true" costs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

Our over-reliance on property taxes as the principal source of local funding forces local governments to make bad land use decisions — or to pay dearly for the right ones.

If we don't face financing our infrastructure challenges now, we (or our children) will pay for it many times over in the future through escalated taxes or severely deteriorated services and quality of life.

May is Historic Preservation Month

"Washington's Communities: A
Living Heritage" is the state theme for
1995 National Historic Preservation
Month. The theme conveys that every
community has a unique heritage
which shaped its development and
should be celebrated. It underscores
that historic preservation is not a
museum piece, but is instead a
dynamic ethic that improves quality of
life by supporting the modern re-use
of the older buildings that make up
our downtowns and neighborhoods.

Communities across the state are planning events including tours, lectures, workshops, and exhibits celebrating their local heritage. The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation will present its annual State Historic Preservation Awards at a ceremony in the State Capitol on May 16, 1995.

For more information about Historic Preservation Month, contact OAHP at 360-753-5010.

King County select committee recommends role for SSB 5038 and citizens in regional service planning

By Dave Gering
Staff, King County Executive Select
Committee on Regional Finances and Services

he King County Executive
Select Committee on Regional
Finances and Services recommends that the planning process
required by SSB 5038 be used to
directly involve citizens in planning
for government infrastructure and
services.

Appointed to study implementation issues for the Growth Management Act, the select committee also recommends that SSB 5038 could be used to achieve the goals of the GMA.

Adopted in 1994, SSB 5038 requires large counties in Washington to convene meetings with representatives of cities and special districts to figure out an improved system for providing government services and facilities on a regional or subregional basis.

The law provides a January 1997 deadline for completion of the process. If local governments fail to reach new service agreements, they will be asked to file status reports with appropriate committees in the state Legislature.

The select committee in King County concluded that elected officials should pursue the 5038 process in collaboration with a broadbased citizen group to assure that the efforts reflects community concerns and priorities. The committee advised that collaboration would also help to expand citizen knowledge about the financial challenges confronting local governments. The committee also thought the process could be used to implement agreements reached by local governments in the new countywide planning policies adopted for King County under the GMA.

The select committee strongly urges elected officials in King County to follow its recommendations. Working together with citizens, elected officials will be able to tackle King County huge infrastructure deficit and its infrastructure needs for the future.



A look at the capital facilities balancing act

By Patrick L. Dugan
Planning and Financial Services Manager,
Berryman & Henigar, Inc.

ne of the most important, yet least understood, parts of a comprehensive plan is the capital facilities plan or element.

In many ways, capital facilities planning is the essence of growth management, since only through effective use of the capital facility planning process can growth management deliver on its promise of reducing the costs of unplanned development.

A good capital facility plan requires matching the amount of facilities that can be financed with the amount of development that will be allowed.

In its most simple form, it can be solved by either increasing the amount of public facilities (supply side) or by reducing the amount, location, or timing of the land development (demand side).

It becomes more complicated when it is noted that more development produces more revenue, but also increases the demand for services. Nonetheless, the ultimate balance to the equation can be approached by either modifying the demand for services created by development or by increasing financial resources to support the supply of facilities.

To balance this equation in a capital facilities plan requires the skills of planners, finance officials, public works staff, and parks professionals working as a team.

The demand side of the capital facilities plan requires answering two questions: How much development will be allowed and where will that development occur? Trying to support too much development, all at once, in several locations, takes far more resources than directing development

to a few, appropriate location where facilities can be efficiently provided.

A basic concept in capital facilities planning is level of service. While LOS can be measured in many ways (park acres per capita, response times for emergency vehicles, sophisticated measures of congestion, gallons of capacity per equivalent residential unit, and so on), the concept boils down to a question of supply and demand: how much facility is necessary to be adequate for how much growth and development? The higher the ratio between level of service desired and the level of development, the more financial resources that will be required to meet the LOS.

The ultimate determination on the supply side of the equation is how much can the jurisdiction afford?

No comprehensive plan can be carried out unless the supporting infrastructure can be financed. This requirement compels jurisdictions to make an accurate assessment of their financial capacities and limitations. While this is potentially a complex task, it should involve several basic questions:

FINANCIAL CAPACITY

How much wealth does the community have? How much assessed value or sales tax volume exists and what are the trends? What are per capita incomes? What is the jurisdiction's debt capacity?

TAX EFFORT

How effectively is the jurisdiction accessing (or how much is it straining) its financial capacity? What are the property tax rates and are all taxing authorities being utilized? How much of the debt capacity has been used?

TRENDS

What are the revenue and expenditure trends? Are revenues keeping up with the expenditures, and why or why not? How well has the jurisdiction competed for grants? What has the jurisdiction's bond issue experience been? What sells and what doesn't?

Answering these questions should provide an understanding of how well the community can respond to the needs identified in its plan. This understanding can become the basis of the financial strategy that should be the heart of the capital facilities plan.

While some financial management training is usually needed to fully understand and interpret the answers to those questions, a planner working with the finance staff can often develop basic insights.

Finally, it is important to recognize that "one size" does not "fit all" in capital facilities planning.

The needs and capacities of a rapidly urbanizing suburb on the edge of a metropolitan region are very different from the needs and capacities of a small, rural growing community.

While the capital facilities plan of the growing suburb may involved complex issues requiring sophisticated techniques, the plan of the small, built out community can be quite uncomplicated.

Balancing land use decisions with financial strategies to fund the supporting infrastructure is growth management. We cannot be successful in providing the benefits many expect from the GMA unless we achieve this balance.

Growth management hearings boards

isted below are new cases or action on existing cases before the state's growth management hearings boards.

Central Puget Sound

CASE No. 94-3-0001 STATUS: FINDING OF COMPLIANCE 1/18/95

City of Tacoma, et. al. vs. Pierce County. Subject: Interim urban growth areas. Appeal filed by county in superior court.

Case No. 94-3-0003 Status: Finding of compliance 10/14/95

City of Black Diamond, et. al. vs. King County. Subject: Critical areas.

CASE No. 94-3-0005 STATUS: FINDING OF COMPLIANCE 1/26/95

Kitsap Citizens for Rural Preservation, et. al. vs. Kitsap County. Subject: Conservation easement ordinance.

Case No. 94-3-0009 Status: Finding of Compliance 1/26/95

Friends of the Law, et. al. vs. King County. Subject: Comprehensive plan and final UGA deadline.

Case No. 94-3-0011 Status: Decision 2/21/95

Ann Aagaard, et. al. vs. City of Bothell. Subject: Comprehensive plan. The board found Bothell's plan is in compliance with the GMA with one exception. A section allowing high-density senior housing throughout the city was returned to the city for revisions.

Case No. 94-3-0014 Status: Decision 3/27/95

Kitsap County vs. Office of Financial Management. Subject: Population projection. The board found the county didn't show its proposed population projection was supported by more objective data, credible assumptions, and analytical methods, and OFM's 2012 projection "stands."

Case No. 94-3-0027 Status: Dismissed 3/17/95

Kitsap Citizens for Rural Preservation vs. Kitsap County. Subject: Amendment to county-wide planning policies.

Case No. 94-3-0029 Status: Dismissed 2/24/95

Corrine Hensley vs. Snohomish County, Cross Valley Water District, and Alderwood Water District. Subject: Sewer trunks outside IUGAs. Dismissed for lack of jurisdiction.

Case No. 94-3-0030 Status: Dismissed 1/24/95

William Wright vs. Mercer Island. Subject: Comprehensive plan.

Forty-one new cases have been filed with the board since the last issue of *About Growth*. The jurisdictions and topics are listed below. Please contact the board at 206-389-2625 for details on petitioners, case numbers, and hearing dates.

King County; comprehensive plan, development regulations.

Bellevue; siting of group homes. Pierce County; comprehensive plan, development regulations, population allocations.

Gig Harbor; comprehensive plan. Kitsap County; comprehensive plan, county-wide planning policies, goals of the GMA, public participation, forest lands, critical areas, development regulations, UGA.

Western Washington

CASE No. 94-2-0009 STATUS: COMPLIANCE HEARING 2/8/95

Whatcom Environmental Council vs. Whatcom County. Subject: Interim UGA. The board has recommended sanctions to the Governor. It found Whatcom County did not comply with the board's order to modify its interim UGAs.

Case Nos. 95-2-0001 through 95-2-0061 Status; Hearings 6/19/95 to 7/7/95

Sixty-one separate appeals were filed from February 13 through March 3 challenging the comprehensive plans of Clark County and some of its cities. The cases are being grouped preliminarily as follows: Group 1: Site-specific designations claimed to be erroneous; Group 2: Airports and surrounding lands; Group 3 and 4: Comprehensive plan challenges; Group 5: UGAs and boundaries. Call the board at 360-664-8966 for details.

Case No. 95-2-0063 Status: Hearing 6/14/95

Whidbey Environmental Action Network vs. Island County. Subject: Failure to meet deadlines and allow public participation.

Case Nos. 95-2-0064 & 95-2-0065 Status: Hearing 7/11/95

Friends of Skagit County, Barbara Rudge, Andrea Xaver vs. Skagit County. Subject: Resource lands and critical areas, interim UGAs, and population projections.

Case No. 95-2-0066 Status: Hearing 7/27/95

Albert Loomis IV vs. Jefferson County. Subject: Interim UGA.

Eastern Washington

CASE No. 94-1-0015 STATUS: SANCTIONS RECOMMENDED

Save Out Butte, et. al. vs. Chelan County, Subject: Resource lands and critical areas. The board found the county out of compliance and recommended sanctions to the Governor.

CASE No. 94-1-0017 STATUS: ORDER OF NON-COMPLIANCE 4/3/95

Ridge vs. Kittitas County. Subject: Forest lands designation. The board found the county didn't meet the GMA's minimum designation requirements for the majority of disputed lands.

CASE No. 94-1-0021 STATUS: DECISION

Shrub-Steppe Ecosystem and Yakama Indian Nation vs. Yakima County. Subject: Critical areas. The board found the county out of compliance and returned the ordinance to the county for compliance by August 10.

CASE No. 94-1-0022 STATUS: DECISION

Yakama Indian Nation vs. Kittitas County. Subject: Critical areas. The board found the county out of compliance and returned the ordinance to the county for modification.

Case No. 95-1-0001 Status: Hearing 7/12/95

Coalition of Responsible Disabled vs. City of Spokane. Subject: Accessory apartment ordinance.

Case No. 95-1-0002 Status: Hearing 7/19/95

Victor and Roberta Moore vs. Whitman County. Subject: Critical areas.

Case No. 95-1-0003 Status: Hearing 7/25/95

City of Ellensburg vs. Kittitas County. Subject: County-wide planning policies' rural density planning.

Concurrency conference slated

Now that your comprehensive plan is finished, are you struggling to figure out GMA transportation requirements to carry out the plan?

An all-day concurrency management conference is scheduled May 25 in the SeaTac area to address how to provide services concurrently with development. It will feature:

- Recommendations of the Level of Service Committee for State Facilities and legislative action, if any;
- Issues and approaches when developing concurrency management ordinance;
- Concurrency management ordinance implementation;
- Level of service standard development;
- Issues and solutions for interjurisdictional consistency and concurrency;
- Capital facilities funding.

The conference is sponsored by Washington State CTED, DOT, Association of Washington Cities, and Washington Association of Counties.

For details, call Holly Gadbaw at 360-753-4315, or Michelle Harvey at 360-753-4137.

Cities meet in Seattle

Cities Doing Business With The World is the theme for the Association of Washington Cities annual conference June 28-30 in Seattle at the Westin Hotel. Sessions on growth management and new legislation will be among those offered.

For details, contact AWC at 360-753-4137.

County convention

County officials will gather June 20-23 at Cavanaugh's at Columbia Center in Kennewick for the annual convention of the Washington State Association of Counties, Growth management, regional services, and regulatory reform will be discussed.

For further information, call WSAC at 360-753-1886.

Thurston County faces funding decisions

By Theresa Morse, Associate Planner, Thurston Regional Planning Council

n March 1993, the Thurston Regional Planning Council adopted its regional transportation plan, "Transportation Future 2010— Making Connections."

The plan identifies goals and policies designed to help us reach our overall goal of reducing drive alone commute trips from 85 percent today to 60 percent by the year 2010. The plan also identifies specific transportation projects, programs, and services to meet the community's needs in the future.

This plan strongly influenced comprehensive plans of the jurisdictions in Thurston County's regional transportation organization.

The regional council is updating its plan. A key element is developing a strategy to fund the projects, programs, and services identified in the plan. This strategy is being developed by the RTPO's Transportation Policy Board and the regional council with staff support from the regional council and jurisdictions that are members of the council.

The funding strategy must deal with an estimated \$250 million funding gap over the 20-year life of the plan between needed facilities and available financial resources.

The board will examine whether it is feasible to fund the plan with entirely regional resources or only local funds. They also will reexamine their expectations and assumptions and possibly consider lowering levels of service, measuring levels of services in different ways, or revising their land use elements.

After alternative strategies are developed, the board will take them to the public.

"The board realizes what a crucial step this is in light of the failure of regional transportation ballot measures in Clark and King counties and the reception the gas tax increase is getting in the Legislature," said Harold Robertson, executive director of Thurston Regional Planning Council. "The selection of any regional transportation funding strategy in Thurston County will need broad public understanding and support."

The regional funding strategy will be incorporated into the update of the regional transportation plan that is scheduled for adoption mid-1996. Then the jurisdictions in the RTPO will incorporate this strategy into future amendments to their comprehensive plans.

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